

GREETINGS FROM THE PASTOR:

August and September have been great months for reducing the summer shortfall the fun way, with incredible food at our *End-of-the-Summer Party*, and strong sales of our *Hungry Howie's Pizza Coupons*. We exceeded all expectations by raising \$4,000 the fun way in September, after having reduced the deficit in August the traditional way, through offerings, with the Treasurer's Report for August telling us that income exceeded expenses by \$4,510.89. Responses like this show Zion's resilience and strength, and they help to build confidence as we enter the fourth quarter of the year and look forward to our Fall Congregational Meeting at the end of October.

October is an important month for our youth, for the women, and for the men of Zion. All of us look forward to a busy October. We begin the month with our introduction to Holy Communion called *Communion Is For Kids*. This is a class for all children who have not yet been confirmed, which is offered during the second service. Since we offer Holy Communion to all the baptized, we need to make sure that we also offer opportunities for our children to understand what God offers through the cross and with the church. The cross reminds us that the blood of Christ was shed for us, and the church is the place where the body of Christ is alive in the world. Learning about Holy Communion is not a once-and-done event. It is a life-long process of growth in grace. Chuck Danner and Debbie Fox lead our effort to teach about this gift that never stops giving.

The Women of Zion celebrate *Blanket Sunday* on October 10. All the pews will be covered with the quilts and blankets we intend to send to the ends of the earth through the efforts of Lutheran World Relief. It is a beautiful sight to behold. Not only can you enjoy the special effects, you can also join in the fun of helping families in need by contributing a blanket to the cause. Quilts, blankets, health kits, school kits: changing the world for good begins with practical measures like these. But changing the world also involves reaching out to neighbors through events like the *Neighborhood Crime Watch* program, which the Men of Zion are hosting on October 6. The program looks fantastic, with special guests like the mayor, the chief of police, crime prevention specialists, with lessons about self-defense for adults, and safety passports for our children.

Then comes the weekend of October 16—17. On Saturday, we host our *Seventh Annual Youth Missions Craft Show & Oktoberfest*. Seventy-plus crafters tables have already been rented. Hundreds of German Take-Out Dinners will be sold. What we have made of this event borders on the unbelievable: huge theme baskets, crafts galore, a bake sale, too. We'll have crafters in Luther Hall, Memorial Hall, Senior Independence, in the Youth Room, along the hallways, around the bend, and everywhere in between. It's going to be quite the spectacular event. Make it a point to join us, and bring your friends, too. Then, make it a point to join us on the afternoon of October 17, when the Adult Sunday School Class will host a pizza party to go along with the showing of *Amazing Grace* in our Sanctuary Theater. It all begins at 3:00 p.m.

While October ritely ends with *Reformation Sunday*, we also look forward to the evening of Wednesday, October 27, when the Sunday School will enjoy their annual Halloween Party, and the rest of us will enjoy our *Fall Congregational Meeting*, where we will break out our party hats and celebrate our approval of the 2011 Proposed Budget. The party begins at 6:00 p.m. in the gym, with dinner at 6:15 p.m. in Luther Hall, and the meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

MORE COUNCIL NEWS

Jim Fidler called our September Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Those in attendance were Sue Heyard, Dave Palumbo, Juanita Cignetti, Dale Jacobs, Tina Beaber, Mark Votaw, Beth Shaheen, Jim Dansizen, Vicki Givler, Pastor Sherwindt. Jim Dansizen had devotions. Our first order of business was the Treasurer’s Report, which offered some good news about strong giving in August. Income exceeded expenses by \$4,510.89! Income was very healthy at \$21,147.84, as compared with expenses of \$16,636.95. Some of that income came in through ticket donations for our *End-of-the-Summer Party*; but that is good news, since the point of this party was to help reduce our summer shortfall, which these donations clearly helped to do.

We were very happy to have given gifts of \$1,000 and \$1,250 to the Food Pantry, from Vacation Bible School and our Community Yard Sale respectively. Our commitment to benevolence remains strong. We hope this good news on the budget front will help us as we prepare the 2011 Proposed Budget, which will be presented at our Congregational Meeting scheduled for Wednesday evening, October 27th, beginning with dinner in Memorial Hall at 6:15 p.m., followed by our meeting in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m.

ZION'S FINANCIAL FACTS FOR AUGUST	
August Income	21,147.84
August Expenses	<u>16,636.95</u>
<i>August Surplus</i>	<i>4,510.89</i>
Income thru August	154,401.03
Expenses " August	<u>163,341.72</u>
<i>2010 Deficit thru August</i>	<i>(8,940.69)</i>
<i>2009 Deficit thru August</i>	<i>(3,747.21)</i>
<i>We thank you for your generous support!</i>	

Witness Ministry: After their success with a Community Yard Sale scheduled the same day as the North Canton Main Street Festival in August, the Witness Team has turned their sights to another outreach event for neighbors with a Neighborhood Watch & Home Safety Workshop set for the evening of Wednesday, October 6, beginning at 6:00 p.m. in Luther Hall. The Men of Zion will meet at 5:30 p.m. to make sure that everything is set for the evening. Pastor Sherwindt will offer words of welcome. Then come the big guns: North Canton’s Mayor David Held and the Chief of Police, Michael Grimes, Stark County Crime Prevention Specialist James Knight, followed by a husband-and-wife demonstration on self-defense, and Nick Perez from Attorney General Richard Cordray’s Office issuing Kids’ Safety Passports. This is a cutting edge resource inspired by all the crime scene investigation television shows, with pages for finger prints, dental records, and hair follicle DNA samples. It should be a great evening for all who joins us: October 6 at 6:00 p.m.

Property Ministry: At the recommendation of Zion’s Trustees, Council approved repairs to the gutters along the west parking lot that were damaged by snow and ice last winter, as well as a service contract calling for twice-a-year inspections of our air-conditioning units. Another important project requiring attention is the drain in the parking lot at the southwest corner of the building where the Senior Independence entrance is located. We’ll need to replace the line that runs from the drain to the street, and redesign the feeder lines that run from the roof through the gutters to the drainage line to the street. This is a project that will require congregational approval, since its price tag will exceed \$5,000. Stay tuned for more information to come.

A DAY AWAY WITH JESUS

On Saturday, September 25, Zion hosted a one-day retreat, *A Day Away with Jesus*, which was sponsored by the Northeastern Ohio Synodical Women's Organization (NEOSWO). One hundred women from all around our synod registered. Betty Tracy was our primary contact with the group, and she did most of the organizing for our hosting the event. The Women of Zion joined together to get everything done for the big day.

The day began with a continental breakfast, which accompanied registration and opening announcements. Devotions followed, with the Rev. Eileen Woyen serving as Presider and Preacher. The Praise Band from Emmanuel Lutheran in New Philadelphia offered a lively musical interlude, which led to the Bible study led by the Rev. Carolyn Wagar-Hier. Catered box lunches in Memorial Hall came next, followed by more music, this time offered by Margaret Reichenbach on our pipe organ. Cathy Byers and Marilyn Sesock led the business meeting that followed, with the afternoon coming to a close with devotions led by the Rev. Sue Rodgers.

There are many persons to thank for contributing to our effort, beginning with Betty Tracy and the Women of Zion. We would like to thank Brian Walters and John Long for working with everyone involved to make sure that the sound system was set right for each of the meetings that occurred throughout the day. Finally, we extend a special thank you to all of the women who attended the retreat. Their offering included a gathering of in-kind gifts that were given to Zion's Food Pantry. Items received included toothpaste, shampoo & conditioner, toilet paper, canned tuna, breakfast cereal, canned fruit, and diabetic foods. Our thanks to all!

WOMEN OF ZION, PART 2

We hope you have found some bargains on buying blankets. Bring them to church with you on *Blanket Sunday, October 10*. We ought to have one colorful display covering our pews when we add your blankets to the quilts that Zion's Comfort Givers have been working on in Luther Hall throughout the year. It is always a sight to see! Our blankets and comforters become a part of a larger shipment through which *Lutheran World Relief* delivers blankets, quilts, school kits and health kits to families across the globe.

In 2009, with the help of Verle Elsass and Garry Leed, the Women of Zion were able to pack up their 64 quilts, 22 blankets, 48 school kits and 67 health kits, and get them delivered to Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Seville. This year, Zion's Comfort Givers will gather in Luther Hall at 9:30 a.m. on *Thursday, October 14*, to begin packing our items in boxes so that they can be driven to Jerusalem Lutheran Church on *Saturday, October 16*. Join in if you are able to help.

The monthly Bible study for the Women of Zion meets on *Tuesday, October 19*, when we will continue our study of *The People of God: Unity in the Midst of Diversity*. Session 2 focuses on *The Body of Christ*. A great text to read for the study is 1st Corinthians 12:12-31. The *Book of Faith Initiative* established four perspectives from which to approach the texts we study: examining the historical context, appreciating the literary form and point, digging deeper devotionally, and looking for Lutheran insights. Mostly, we are looking forward to discovering more about this miracle that changed the world, the unity of the community we call the church. We'll meet in the Resource Center on October 19 at 9:30 a.m. We would love for you to join us.

MEN OF ZION NEWS

It is common knowledge by now that Zion's *End-of-the-Summer Party* was another huge success! The weather once again cooperated. We had great attendance, great food, great music, and we displayed great support for our many ministries by whittling away at what turned out to be a surprising summer shortfall. We had more than 140 persons join us on the Sunday of Labor Day Weekend. Once again, our grilling stations were outstanding, thanks to the Cizek family, Mark Votaw, along with his boys, Tom and Jon, Dale Jacobs, Chris Thomas, Brian Milek, and Dave Palumbo. Cathy Harvey did a great job in organizing sides, salads, desserts, and drinks. In all honesty, a Sunday brunch buffet like the one we served at our *End-of-the-Summer Party* would cost \$20 per person at any local restaurant. The food was unbelievable. The fellowship was great, and thanks again to Zach for letting us know that he really enjoys playing for us. Thanks so much to everyone who made this event such a huge success. When all was said and done, cleaned up and paid for, we raised \$2,350.00 to reduce the deficit we encountered this summer. Our efforts to add to this amount by selling pizza coupons has added another \$1,650.00 to the coffers, proving that "eating our way out of the deficit" was both fun and effective in raising funds and awareness.

The regular monthly meeting is **Wednesday, October 6th**, when we will need to meet at 5:30 p.m. so that we can get ready for the great evening we're planning with the Witness Team, our *Neighborhood Crime Watch & Home Safety Program*. We're going to have special guests, special effects, a safety passport for all the kids that attend, and free pizza for everybody! Plan to join us at 6:00 p.m. on October 6. It'll be worth your while.

IT'S NOW A DONE DEAL!

The New Carpet is installed! I know it may not sound like much, but like many of the projects we've completed at Zion, a lot of members had a hand in our success. First of all, everyone who donated helped us reach our goal with ease. Then there were the many folks who helped us prepare for the new carpet by dismantling the old radiators, cutting through pipes, grinding them down, taking off the coving, pulling up the carpet, carrying it out to the dumpster, painting the walls, and seeing to it that the floors were ready for the carpet installers from Heritage Carpet, a business based right here in North Canton. It is amazing how many persons helped, how proficiently they worked, and how much we saved. The carpet installers were so impressed by our preparatory work that they were unable to add any charges to the original bid! When all was said and done, it turned out that we raised \$7,225 for the new carpet and we spent \$7,216.

It is almost impossible to list all the persons who were instrumental in completing this project. We can begin by thanking Zion's trustees: Chris Thomas, Bob Lancashire, John Brokloff, John Rhodes, Adam Schrader, Betty Boettler and Beth Shaheen, too. We also need to thank the Walters family, the Votaw boys, the Beaber family, Carl Geib, Verle Elsass, Dan Wilson, Charlie & Shirley Cavender, Gary Horton, Robert Henderson, Garry Leed, Laura Kay, John Long, Howard Dansizen. This was a congregational effort, and we are all so very appreciative of everything that everyone did. Thank you, Men of Zion, and thank you, people of God, for helping us put the finishing touch on all the work we've done these last few years in replacing the HV/AC system, renovating the Sanctuary, and upgrading the sound system. Great job!

GREAT NEWS FROM ZION'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

UPCOMING EVENTS – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- Sunday, October 3rd:** *Communion Is For Kids* class begins during the second service
Wednesday, October 6: Neighborhood Crime Watch & Home Safety Workshop, 6 p.m.
Saturday, October 16: Youth Missions “Oktoberfest” Craft Show 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Wednesday, October 27: Zion’s Annual Sunday School Halloween Party at 6:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 7: All Saints’ Day: Communion Class Certificates at 10:30 a.m.

PRE-KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THE SIXTH GRADE

Our Sunday School year is off to a great start! The kids are enjoying our new curriculum – Spark! There are great stories, crafts, games and snacks that go along with each lesson. Your children will also be bringing home a family newsletter each week so you can share in what they are learning. We have developed a familiar routine for Sunday School every week, which begins with the Children’s Choir practice at 9:10 a.m. in the Choir Room, followed by Sunday School classes that start at 9:30 a.m. and end at 10:20 a.m. This year’s teachers are as follows: Connie Riffle for Pre-K thru 1st grade; Janet Slease for 2nd & 3rd grades; Vicki Givler & Sharon Stout for 4th & 5th grades. We thank our teachers for all of their time and dedication to our children, and we ask that our parents support them with faithful attendance.

ZION’S “COMMUNION CLASS FOR KIDS” CONTINUES THROUGH OCTOBER

Chuck Danner will continue to lead our *Communion Class for Kids*. This class takes place during the 10:30 a.m. service. Its first session is October 3, and classes will continue through October. On November 7th, *All Saints Sunday*, we will congratulate our children with certificates that thank them for participating in this important introduction to the meaning of Holy Communion. Charlie’s class will be for our Sunday School children in Kindergarten thru 6th grade. Debbie Fox & Miriam Keating will also have short sessions during this time for our Pre-K children, if parents are interested. Please contact Charlie Danner or Debbie Fox with any questions.



MORE GREAT NEWS FOR ZION'S YOUTH

CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION AND THE HIGH SCHOOL CLASS

We will once again have the Youth Halloween Party during Zion's Fall Congregational Meeting, which is **Wednesday, October 28th**. The Halloween Party goes from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. We'll meet in Memorial Hall, and start with pizza and other snacks for dinner. We will have games, crafts, and lots of other surprises, followed by our *trick or treating* at the end. We ask that children wear their costumes, and that they bring a pumpkin to decorate. If anyone would like to donate candy or small items for trick or treating, that would be appreciated. Sign up sheets for the Halloween Party are located in the Church Office. Sign up by Sunday, October 24, so we'll have enough food and supplies. Friends are welcome. Also, we would like Zion's older youth to help out if they are available that evening.



ZION'S SEVENTH ANNUAL YOUTH MISSIONS CRAFT SHOW & FALL "OKTOBERFEST"

The Craft Show is fast approaching! Zion's Youth will once again have a table at this year's show. The kids will be making chocolates and other goodies to sell this year along with our Bake Sale Table. We look forward to the delicious items our youth are making. We will again have great raffle baskets that will be donated by the Sunday School Classes. Raffle tickets for these baskets will go on sale Sunday, October 11: the cost will be 3 for \$1, or 20 for \$5. The baskets will be raffled off the night of our Congregational Meeting, October 28. This year's baskets are as follows: Miss Janet & Miss Connie's Classes (Pre-K thru 3rd) will make a ***Celebrate the Holidays Basket*** and a ***Sweet Treats Basket***; Miss Vicki & Miss Sharon's Class (4th & 5th) will create the ***Ohio State Fan Basket***; the Catechism Class will make our ***Arts & Crafts/Rainy Day Basket***; the High School Class will make the ***Family Movie Night Basket***.

Our Youth Missions Craft Show raises money for all sorts of youth ministry programming, including the planning of future mission trips and youth events. We will be selling tickets for the German take-out dinners for \$8 each. Please help support our Youth as they join us in growing in love and service by grace. And Youth of Zion, don't forget that your help is needed, too, especially on October 17th, when we will need help with all aspects of the craft show. We will need the kids to staff the youth tables, to help the other crafters unload, to help in the concession area and bake sale table, and to be available for any other odds and ends that come up. ***We will also need help with set up on Friday, October 16th, from 6 – 8 p.m.*** There will be sign up sheets in Luther Hall for all those who can help! There will also be sign up sheets for the congregation in Luther Hall for food items, bake sale items, set up, and help during the craft show. Your support as always is greatly appreciated!

COLLECTING "ACME RECEIPTS" RESUMES

We are now collecting Acme Receipts to help raise funds for the youth. This year we will receive ***cash back credit*** for receipts dated ***September 26, 2010 through February 19, 2011***. Please be sure your receipt has the "***Community Cash Back***" amount at the bottom. There will be collection cans in Memorial Hall by the coffee counter on Sunday mornings, and in the Church Office all week long. Please save your receipts and help us raise money for our youth! Thank you in advance for your great support!

HOLY COMMUNION CLASS

Our premise is so very simple. Since we offer Holy Communion to all the baptized, we must also offer opportunities to grow in our understanding of what God is doing through this gracious gift. That's what we are trying to do with our annual *Communion Is For Kids* class, which is offered during the second service each and every Sunday in October, beginning with Sunday, October 3. All of our kids who have not yet been confirmed are invited to attend. You see, understanding Holy Communion is not a once-and-done event. We grow in understanding God's grace day by day as we participate in the activities of worship and service that make up the heart and soul of our church. Knowing God is not the same thing as thinking about God. Believing in God is more than having a thought about God while we are at home. Thinking about God is good, but the way we get to know God is by worshipping Him. Worship and service turn isolated thoughts we have by ourselves into a real relationship with a living, loving God.

"What are the classes like?" you ask. I think that Chuck Danner said it best with a story he told several years ago, and I've learned that I cannot improve on it: "We discuss the *Means of Grace* as the ways God shows His love to us through the Word and Sacraments. Part of this discussion raises the question of what we need to know to be ready to receive the body and blood. Our answer is *simply a believing heart*. This opens the door to discussing a believing heart as *a faithful heart, a loving heart, and a forgiving heart*, all while remembering that we have Jesus in our hearts to be with us." These classes are a great experience for our kids, the teachers, their helpers, and parents, too. There's always something to learn about the meaning of Holy Communion.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Romans is a great systematic overview of what God had done in Jesus Christ. It was absolutely crucial to Luther's discovering the answer to the question that drove him to take on the mantle of Church Reformer, namely, how do we find a gracious God. *Romans* is the place where the Good News is everywhere apparent. It is a great letter to read, and a powerful epistle to study. We will be doing both at our Adult Sunday School Class during the month of October. We'll start with some organizational overview on October 3. Then, we'll look at some great ways to organize its point on October 10. On October 17, we look at some of the great themes that help us to appreciate the contribution this epistle has made to the life of the church. We will continue this theme through October 24, until we intersect with Martin Luther's deep devotion to the truths he found in Romans, which proved to be the guiding principle of the Reformation, which we celebrate with the Festival of the Reformation on Sunday, October 31.

The introduction to Romans announces its theme: *the righteous by faith will live*. (Ro. 1:16) Chapters 1 through 4 describe what it means to be *righteous by faith*; chapters 5 through 8 spell out the particulars when promised that we *will live*. Freedom is the key to knowing how we will live; and in consecutive chapters we are told that those who are righteous-by-faith will live *free from fear of condemnation* (chapter 5), *free from the power of sin* (chapter 6), *free from the burden of the law* (chapter 7), and *free from the curse of death* (chapter 8). What clarity! What symmetry! What power and insight! It's all here in the *Book of Romans*, and we would like for you to join us in Luther Hall between the services on Sunday morning.

JAYNE'S ECOLOGY CORNER

Now that we know what a *carbon footprint* is, let's look into a *carbon toe-print*. To review, a carbon footprint is an estimate of how much carbon dioxide we produce to support our lifestyle. *Footprint* is a metaphor for the total impact that something has; and *carbon* is shorthand for all the different greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. A *carbon toe-print* consists of all of the goods and services we purchase and use, which follow energy use all the way down the line. For instance, the carbon toe-print of driving a car includes not only the emissions that come out of the exhaust pipe, but also all the emissions that take place when oil is extracted, shipped, refined into fuel and transported to the gas station, not to mention the substantial emissions caused by producing and maintaining the car, which is what a carbon toe-print is considered to be.

Here are some suggestions for what we can do to reduce our carbon footprint.

- Turn it off when not in use (lights, television, DVD player, computer etc.)
- Check the central heating timer setting - remember there is no point heating the house after you have left for work
- Fill your dish washer and washing machine with a full load, for this will save you water, electricity, and washing detergent

Here are suggestions for what we can do to reduce our carbon toe-print:

- Don't buy bottled water if your tap water is safe to drink
- Buy local fruit and vegetables
- Buy foods that are in season locally
- Try to buy products made close to home
- Don't buy over packaged products
- Recycle as much as possible

BIG DAYS TO REMEMBER

Dear members of the Zion church family,

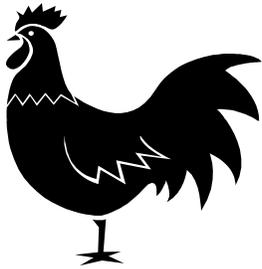
Everyone is invited to help Blair Woodside, Jr., celebrate his ninetieth birthday with an Open House at his home, which is located in Bob-O-Links Estates at 2365 Sheffield Street NW. The big day is **Saturday, October 9**, from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. If you are travelling east on Applegrove Street, take a left on Starcliff Avenue, and go to your fourth street, which is Beechmoor Road, and turn right. The first street that crosses Beechmoor Road is Sheffield Street. Blair's house will be the one with all the cars. For those with a great sense of direction, it's on the northwest corner of this intersection. Come celebrate Blair's 90th birthday and share some great memories, too. Make the time to join us for what should be a really great day.

*No gifts please; just come and visit!
Blair, Bruce, Brian, and Brent*

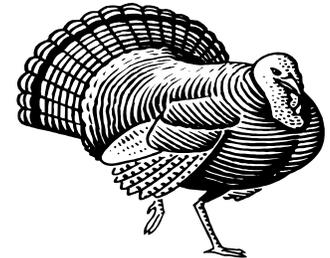
FOOD FOR THOUGHT FROM ZION'S FOOD PANTRY

Last month we visited the Canfield Fair. This Fair represents what a real county fair used to be. The Canfield Fair had every farm animal that this city girl could have hoped to see. By far my favorite was the Draft Horse barns; but, of course, we had to visit the goat, sheep, pig, cow and llama barns, plus the fowl pavilion. Upon seeing so many turkeys, all I could visualize was a 20-pound turkey, completely plucked, filled with the tastiest stuffing, and slowly basting in a roaster in its cage.

Just recently Charlie and I visited Key West. There were three things which held my interest. The first was Ernest Hemmingway and learning he was bi-polar and had suffered through electric shock treatments. The second and third were all the roosters and chickens roaming free among the tourists. Upon talking to our guide we learned what was up with all the chickens. Of course, all I saw was fresh meat to feed the hungry. We were informed that the chickens have been declared *protected*. It is not like Hemmingway's special six toed kitties or that the chickens have a special lineage traceable back to the Spaniards. It is due to the insightfulness of the local City Council, which declared Key West a bird sanctuary, for all birds, no matter if they take flight or cross the road to get to the other side. Can you just imagine all the fresh meat running through the streets of that tiny island at the tip of Florida. I find it discouraging that they value the chickens over human beings. I just wonder if the governing body of Key West realized there are people in America who go to bed hungry.



All the chickens crossing my path reminded me that Thanksgiving is right around the corner. As we have in the past, we will again be supplying 100 complete Thanksgiving meals. The meals will be divided between thirty-two group homes, with the remainder being given to the families we serve through Zion's Pantry. What we have asked every year from the members of Zion is a 12-pound turkey (already plucked). If you are not into plucking, then we would appreciate your monetary donation, and we will gladly do the shopping for you. We ask that all monies or turkeys be in place by Sunday, November 14th.



With God all things are possible,
Shirley Cavender

P.S. A quick reminder to pantry volunteers: plan on Civil Rights and Food Handling Training for Tuesday, October 5th, at 8:00 a.m. at Zion. Breakfast will be provided. See you there! Also, we would like to express our thanks to the women who contributed all those great goodies at the Northeastern Ohio Synodical Women's Organization Fall Retreat, and we would like to thank the local ELKS Club for their generous cash contribution to our ministry. We also extend a great big thank you to the kids and adults who gave so much through Vacation Bible School, the Koinonia Class at Community Christian for remembering us every month, and to all the folks who supported us through their support of our Community Yard Sale. Thanks so much.

FUN FACTS ABOUT THE REFORMATION AND MARTIN LUTHER

- † Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483 in Eisleben, Germany to hardworking, conservative Catholics, Hans and Margarete Luther, who were determined to see their son succeed. It's not clear whether they thought their son was a success, but quite recently, in a moment of great pride, when I was asked to share a few words with our partners at St. Paul's Catholic Church during one of our Advent Season series, I was happy to share the interesting news that Martin Luther was voted *Man of the Millennium* by the Religious Newswriters Association, an international organization of reporters and editors of religious news.
- † Some things you should know about the Lutheran Reformation: 1) the Lutheran Reformers were Catholic; they wanted to change the church, not start a new one; 2) ordinary individuals in medieval times were not allowed to choose their own religion; they could believe what they wanted, but could only practice the faith that the local prince chose; 3) Martin Luther wasn't the only reformer; within a generation he would be joined by John Calvin in Geneva and Henry VIII in England; 4) the world was changing; the printing press was invented; movements like humanism and nationalism were challenging traditional Catholic teaching; and the significance of the individual was taking center stage in Western thought and life.
- † In April of 1521, Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk, was put on trial by the Roman Catholic Church. He had been severely critical of the pope, the practices of bishops, the efforts of fundraisers, many church teachings, the validity of some of the sacraments, church corruption locally, in Germany, and in Rome.... At this trial, Luther was convicted of heresy. Anyone caught following any of his teachings would be condemned. But Luther and his followers were not crushed. They went on to reform the church and change the world. Faith was the key to Luther. In his own study and translation of the Bible, he discovered that faith is essential to an everlasting relationship with God. "We are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ." Faith, according to Luther, is best defined as trust; it is the willingness to rely on Jesus through all the challenges of life.
- † A short history of Luther's life: Luther began his studies at the University of Erfurt in 1501, where he received a Bachelor's degree, a Master's degree, and then planned to go to law school, until he was caught in a thunderstorm on July 2, 1505, which led him to change course and enter the Augustinian monastery at Erfurt, where he took his monastic vows in 1506, was ordained in 1507, and then continued his studies in theology at the University of Erfurt, where he received his doctorate in 1512. He lectured on the Psalms, Romans and Galatians from 1512 through 1517, and nailed his *95 Theses* to the doors of All Saints Church, the city church in Wittenberg, where he also served as a parish priest. This occurred on October 31, 1517.
- † Luther died in Eisleben, February 18, 1546. His grave was opened in 1892, and they discovered his remains remained!